

Highlights -- Final 2006 Integrated Report Guidance -- July 2005

The *Guidance for 2006 Assessment, Listing, and Reporting Requirements Pursuant to Sections 303(d), 305(b), and 314 of the Clean Water Act* [2006 Integrated Report Guidance (IRG)] was issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This guidance, for states, territories, authorized tribes, and interstate commissions that help states prepare and submit 305(b) reports (hereinafter referred to as “jurisdictions”), is a comprehensive compilation of relevant guidance EPA has issued to date regarding Integrated Reports (IR); however, there are few specific changes from the 2004 guidance. The 2006 IRG provides:

- 1) increased emphasis on the use of the Assessment Database (ADB) or compatible electronic data format (the ADB is being modified to accommodate the recent format, content, and multi-category listing option that the guidance suggests),
- 2) greater clarity on the content and the format of the IR that are recommended and required under Clean Water Act (CWA) sections 303(d), 305(b), and 314,
- 3) greater clarity on issues associated with data solicitation, collection, consideration, and interpretation of water quality standards,
- 4) additional information on the option to report water quality status of individual segments in more than one category (e.g., to show that some designated uses of a water are being attained and some designated uses are not), and
- 5) additional clarity and flexibility on undertaking and reporting alternatives to total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for attaining water quality standards (e.g., utilization of reporting “Category 4b”).

Highlights of each section of the 2006 IRG are as follows:

Section 1 (Introduction) – This section includes an overview and basic statements regarding goals and use of listing and monitoring approaches.

Section 2 (Reporting Requirements under CWA sections 303(d), 305(b), and 314) – The IRG reporting requirements for all three of these CWA sections are clearly stated. The guidance reaffirms that the IR can be used to satisfy 305(b) reporting/eligibility requirements for 106 grant funds and water quality report eligibility requirements for 205(j) grant funds.

Section 3 (Recommended Organization of Integrated Reports) – This section provides greater clarity on the content and the format of those components of the IR that are recommended and required under CWA sections 303(d), 305(b), and 314.

Section 4 (Issues Concerning the Development and Use of an Assessment and Listing Methodology) – This section reiterates EPA’s position on interpretation of conflicting lines of evidence and clarifies EPA’s expectation regarding assembly, evaluation, and use of water quality data information.

Section 5 (Five-Part Categorization of Waters) – This section clarifies the option to place waters into more than one of the five reporting categories that classify waters as meeting or not meeting applicable water quality standards. Category 2 can now include waters not supporting one or more uses (if at least one designated use is supported). Waters can be moved to Category 4 if one or more (but not all) necessary total maximum daily loads have been completed. This section also encourages use of the National Hydrography Dataset as a foundation for georeferencing, but explains that you can use other compatible formats. Finally, the section

clarifies that qualification for 4b does not require what was historically described as "enforceable" pollution controls, provided certain conditions are met; examples are provided to demonstrate a wide range of scenarios for acceptable 4b actions (i.e., National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits to fully voluntary controls).

Section 6 (Reporting Results) — This section provides EPA's preference on the format for jurisdictions' transmittal of information in the IR.

The final 2006 IRG is available at: <http://www.epa.gov/owow/tmdl/2006IRG>. If you have any questions, please contact Sarah Furtak at (202) 566-1167.